

They had no guarantee of survival when they approached their beachhead. Many now say that even with 50 years gone by, they remember expecting that they would not survive. They had no guarantees, but they went on against gunfire, under shelling, over land mines. Against all, they plowed ahead. And they knew that unless they prevailed, our very way of life might be lost.

The sacrifices of their yesterdays have given us the promise of freedom in our tomorrows. A grateful nation must never forget that. It is our obligation to make a world in which no D-Day will ever be necessary again. Working together, with American leadership, we can do that. We can resist tyranny. We can combat

terrorism and contain chaos. We can work for peace, for progress, for human rights. The sacrifices of those who went before us demand no less. Like the soldiers who fought on D-Day and in Italy, our great Nation must always push onward to see our freedom endure. For when our memories exceed our dreams, we have begun to grow old. And it is the destiny and the obligation of America to remain forever young.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: This address was recorded at 4:41 p.m. on May 27 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 28.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Breakfast May 30, 1994

Thank you very much. Thank you, Hershel, for that kind of introduction and for the good work that you do for our veterans every day. Secretary Perry, Postmaster General Runyon, General Shalikashvili and the chiefs of our military services, General Gordon at the Military District here in Washington, to the other distinguished guests who are here. Let me welcome you here for another happy and honorable Memorial Day.

I'd like to begin, if I might, by asking one person here to stand and be acknowledged. I want to say a special word of thanks to General Mick Kicklighter and the World War II Commemoration Committee for the remarkable work they have done in organizing this commemoration and what we are about to do in the coming week. General, please stand up. [*Applause*] Thank you.

In just a few moments, I will sign two proclamations, one a prayer for peace on Memorial Day and the other the declaration of D-Day National Remembrance Day. Before I do that and before Postmaster General Runyon unveils this year's additions to the World War II commemorative stamps, I'd like to say just a word about this occasion.

Fifty years ago, our Nation and our allies were engaged in a monumental struggle, the outcome of which was far from clear for quite a long while. Americans from all walks of life were

called far from their homes and their families. Franklin Roosevelt spoke of their mission on the morning of the 6th of June, D-Day: "Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity. . . . They fight not for the lust of conquest, they fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise and tolerance and good will among all God's people."

Today, we enjoy the fruits of that toil. We owe our liberty and our prosperity to the strength and the valor of those who fought in that great struggle. But we also inherit the responsibility of defending that gift. We must be the guardians of the freedom that was delivered to us today by what we do here at home to keep freedom alive and to enhance its meaning.

And around the world our men and women in uniform stand guard, guaranteeing and defending that freedom. I think the veterans of D-Day and World War II who are here must take a great deal of pride in knowing that today's men and women in uniform are the finest, most well-motivated Armed Forces our Nation or any nation has ever known. Our highest commitment must be to ensure that they remain so, best trained, best equipped, best prepared. If they must be in harm's way, they must have the support they need and deserve.

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As we observe the 50th anniversary of World War II, we must also pause to remember and to pay tribute to those who did not come home, to honor them for the ultimate sacrifice, to honor their families, their friends, those who love them. Also, we must honor those who are here and those they represent who did come home after service in World War II and all those who have guarded our security since. Our Nation is in your debt. We will never forget your valor, your sacrifices, the daily lives that you have made possible.

Let me say, too, a special word of appreciation to those of you who came through the line today who told me that you, too, were going back to Europe this week to be part of that celebration. I hope when you go back, you will feel the immense pride and gratitude that all Americans feel for the sacrifice you made, the commitment you made, and for all the days

you made possible in the 50 years since. And I hope everyone else who is here being honored today will also share in some of that pride. We sometimes forget that no democracy in human history has ever lasted as long as the United States of America. It is easy to forget that. It is easy to forget it, but if you measure against all the recorded history of civilization, every day we have is a miracle, a miracle that you made possible, and we thank you for it.

I'm going to sign the proclamations, and then Mr. Gober and Mr. Runyon are in charge of the rest of the program.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Hershel Gober. The proclamations are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia *May 30, 1994*

Thank you very much, Mrs. McIntosh, for your fine introduction and for your service to our Nation in Asia during the Second World War. To you and your husband, Professor Shriner, who sang so well—I could imagine him at the age of 24 singing again; to Katy Daley; all the others here; and General Gordon; the distinguished leaders of our Armed Forces, the Congress, and the administration; to the leaders of the veterans' organizations present here; to all of you who are veterans and your families; my fellow Americans.

This morning we join, as we always do on this day, to honor the sacrifices that have made our Nation free and strong. All across our Nation, small towns are holding quiet Memorial Day ceremonies. Proud veterans are pinning on their medals. Children are laying wreaths. Men and women in uniform everywhere stand a little bit taller today as they salute the colors.

Here at Arlington, row after row of headstones, aligned in silent formation, reminds us of the high cost of our freedom. Almost a quarter of a million Americans rest here alone, from every war since the Revolution. Among them are many names we know: General Per-

shing, Audie Murphy, General Marshall, and so many others. But far more numerous are the Americans whose names are not famous, whose lives were not legend but whose deeds were the backbone that secured our Nation's liberty. Today we honor them. We honor them all as heroes, those who are buried here and those who are buried all around the Nation and the world.

If you look at the headstones, they don't tell you whether the people buried there are poor or rich. They make no distinction of race or of age or of condition. They simply stand, each of them, for one American. Each reminds us that we are descendants, whatever our differences, of a common creed, unbeatable when we are united: one nation under God.

Fifty years ago, the world learned just what Americans are capable of when we joined in common cause in World War II. Later this week it will be my great honor to represent our Nation in Europe at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the World War II campaigns at Normandy and in Italy.

World War II was an era of sacrifice unequalled in our own history. Over 400,000